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DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

MAKING TEACHERS' MEETINGS WORTH WHILE

Professor M. V. O'Shea, Madison, Wis.:

DEAR PROFESSOR O'SHEA: I have read with interest and approval your editorial in the November issue of the *School Review*. Your criticism of the declaration of principles of the N. E. A. may be applied to a majority of the papers and discussions given in our state and district meetings. Our teachers attend these meetings hungry for something they can use in their work, hungry for that which deals with the schoolroom problems and progress of the present, but instead of getting that which satisfies they are compelled to listen to platitudes and truisms which serve to weary them and cause them to discount the value of educational gatherings beyond their social side. It has for some time seemed to me that we educators should wake up to what these meetings can do for the work. We need to have more sense and less pride in the matter of accepting places on programmes. If we are asked to participate in them, and have nothing beyond common knowledge to present on the subject assigned, if we can discuss no phase of it specifically, if we have no solution to the problem, if it be a problem, if we have no experiences to relate or thoughts on the work that will inspire our coworkers, we should have the good sense to admit our inability to give that which is worth while and decline to have a part in the discussions.

I feel that our programmes need rejuvenating, that they should be cut down in the number of subjects discussed, and that these discussions should be given by those fitted by experience and ability to handle them in a way to inspire, help, and command respect.

I have been greatly helped by educational gatherings, but I have also been bored and bored. I thank you for your editorial, for it is to the point and courageous.

Very cordially,

E. A. FREEMAN

GRAND RAPIDS, MINN.

THE STUDY OF INDIVIDUAL TRAITS

Editor of the "School Review":

On p. 605 of the November *School Review* Mr. Judd says, "The only way . . . by which this can be accomplished is to interest those who are in direct contact with high-school children in the observation of their

traits," etc. In the next sentence, the first in the following paragraph, he goes on to say that he has made this proposition from time to time to high-school teachers and has received a response which has left him pessimistic as to the accomplishment of any such thing.

Will not Mr. Judd give us more definite information as to just what traits in high-school pupils he thinks it would be wise for us to observe? I believe that there are teachers all over the country who would respond if he should print a syllabus in the *School Review* which would guide our powers of observation toward the important points. If he does not care to receive the responses himself, such a syllabus might help to clarify the ideas of those who filled it out—even if they never submitted the result to another investigator.

For my part, it is my trade to observe high-school pupils with reference to mental capacity, diligence, truthfulness, good manners, powers of memorizing, powers of reasoning, sense of humor, physical condition, attitude toward studies, attitude toward teachers, etc. I will not bore you with a longer list. What will Mr. Judd have? Is it any of these, or something more?

Very truly yours,

MARY C. ROBINSON

BANGOR, ME.